

## Water project helps Malake Island village

IN commissioning the Malake Water Project that links the island to the mainland water supply, the Prime Minister, the Honourable Voreqe Bainimarama, said that childhood prayers of resident Matelita Nauga, and indeed of all the residents have been answered.

“And I couldn’t be more happy as your Prime Minister to be able to do so. To provide you with a precious resource that is part of my Government’s programme to give ordinary Fijians the things they need and the things that previous Governments should have delivered long ago.”

For decades, the 400 residents of Malake, which lies off the coast near Rakiraki, have been dependant upon rain or underground water. The Honourable Prime Minister said no longer are the people of Malake hostage to the long, dry spells that sometimes created



The Prime Minister, the Honourable Voreqe Bainimarama, commissions the Malake project while the villagers celebrate the occasion.

acute water shortages on the island.

The five-phase, \$650,000 project consisted of laying a 300 metre pipe from Viti Levu to the edge of the mangroves. Next, a 1.5 kilometre underwater pipeline was constructed on the seabed of the 15 metre-deep channel between Viti Levu and Malake. Anchor blocks hold the pipeline in place, preventing potential damage by passing

vessels.

This was then connected to the 1.8 kilometre pipeline that was laid on the island itself and then a 20,000-litre reservoir tank was constructed on the island. The fifth and final stage was the connection of water meters to the 135 households and the turning on of their taps.

“I want to thank everyone involved for bringing this project to completion- the Water Authority of Fiji and the workers engaged on the project. I’m delighted to learn that of the 25 workers involved,

fifteen were engaged from Malake village. And it is their hard work - along with the rest of the construction team and divers - that we celebrate today.

“As always with projects of this kind, there were elements of risk, but it’s a tribute to the entire team that we had no accidents and no negative environmental impact during the construction phase. Vinaka vakalevu to you all.”

## Historic Pacific Memorandum of Understanding signed at Forum

THE Pacific Water and Wastewater Association (PWWA) and the Caribbean Water associations have signed a memorandum of understanding to foster inter-regional cooperation.

“This signing is an historic first,” said Water Authority of Fiji (WAF) CEO, Mr Opetaiia Ravai, who is also Chairman of PWWA.

The MOU was signed at the recent 7th Annual Water Forum held in South Korea. With 38,000 participants, this is the world’s largest water meeting, and is held every three years.

“The purpose of the MOU is to facilitate better cooperation between the two areas for better water and wastewater services, including capacity development through shared experience, expertise and knowledge.



Celebrating the signing of the MOU are: (left to right), Latu Kupa (Executive Director, PWWA Secretariat); Taeko Yokota (UN Habitat); Opetaiia Ravai (Chairman PWWA); Faraj El-Awar (GWOPA/UN Habitat); Jason Johnson (President CWWA); Bernard Ettinoffe (President CAWASA) and Jose Bordes (UN Habitat).

“A better utilisation of resources and an increased awareness of shared issues between the two areas is of significant importance as we move forward,” said Mr Ravai.

In his address to the Forum, Mr Ravai reviewed the challenges facing the 26 water and wastewater facilities in the 21 countries that comprise PWWA.

Collectively, PWWA provides

329,000 water connections, and 64,000 sewerage connections.

“We provide water to a population of 1.9 million and wastewater service to 0.4 million. And we do so in our countries spread over an area that covers nearly 450,000 square miles,” said Mr Ravai, who pointed out the importance of expanding the role of the PWWA Secretariat to better serve the region and called

for financial support from funding agencies.

He emphasised the vulnerability of atoll countries such as Kiribati and Tuvalu and delegates noted with “grave concern” the sustainability of water supply and sanitation in these countries.

A major theme of the conference was the need for greater awareness of the impact of climate change.

“Consumers need to be educated about better management of water as a limited resource and how supply can be affected by climate change,” he said.

Mr Ravai highlighted the Fiji Government’s commitment to strengthen water and sanitation

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# From the CEO's desk



Mr Opetai Ravai.

WHEN the Honourable Prime Minister commissioned the Malake Island Water Project, the joy on the faces of the people was a testament to the importance of a clean, safe, reliable supply of water.

The Water Authority of Fiji (WAF), in support of the Government's commitment to meeting United Nations development goals, continues to work with rural communities and villages, as access to potable water is a basic human right.

Indeed, Water and

Sustainable Development was the 2015 World Water Day theme. But with rights come responsibilities. Water is a finite resource and we all need to respect this fact by developing our awareness and making a habit of water conservation practices.

The call for greater care of this precious, God-given resource is taking centre-stage at international conferences. Conservation and the impact of climate change on water resources and sanitation

services, with particular reference to Pacific Island countries and territories, was a major topic on the agenda at the 7th World Water Forum in Korea.

WAF is engaged in dialogue with various local stakeholders with regard to improving the community's contribution to better environmental practices.

WAF is working to provide and improve service delivery to all Fijians. Key to this is the improvement to infrastructure made possible by Government's 2015 Budget allocation of \$230

million.

For our infrastructure and service delivery to improve, our people at WAF also need to grow. Hence the capacity building programme that is developing staff with local and overseas training experiences.

## Water and Sustainable Development- World Water Day Theme



Acting Team Leader, Corporate Communications, Mr Navinesh Kumar (front right) with the West Customer Care Team managing the WAF booth at the World Water Day celebrations in Nadi.

"MUCH is expected of us as custodians of this finite and fragile resource of water. Let's all be Water Champions and be advocates for water conservation in our families, communities, schools and businesses."

This was the message delivered by Water Authority of Fiji (WAF) CEO, Mr Opetai Ravai, at the World Water Day Celebrations held on the 20th of March at Koroivolu Park, Nadi.

Mr Ravai said that although water holds the key to

sustainable development and is necessary for health, food security and economic progress, this finite resource is under serious threat.

Water crises are now ranked as the number one risk for 2015, with one in three people already living in a country experiencing moderate to high water stress.

"By 2030, nearly half the global population could be facing water scarcity, with demand outstripping supply by 40%," said Mr Ravai. "Climate change and the needs of populations growing in size and prosperity mean we must work together to protect and manage this fragile, finite resource. Water conservation is a key factor in the overall endeavour of promoting

sustainable development."

Mr Ravai encouraged everyone to practice some "quick wins" by turning off taps when not in use, repairing domestic leaks, reporting public leaks to the relevant authorities, using small showerheads and timers to control shower water and considering the use of recycled water or stored rainwater to flush toilets.

"We are all stakeholders in this undertaking of water conservation and we all have our respective part to play in this ever-changing world," said Mr Ravai.

The annual World Water Day celebration is a United Nations initiative, driven in Fiji by the Water & Sewerage Department.

## Continued reduction in intermittent water supplies

The intermittent water supplies to Water Authority of Fiji (WAF) customers have been reduced by 67%.

This translates into approximately 30,150 customers who now have a sustained,

reliable water supply every time they turn on the tap.

WAF is committed to reducing the remaining 33% that remains and is carrying out the necessary work to ensure this takes place.

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services and outlined WAF operations, especially in risk management. Particular interest was shown at the Forum in the twinning programme between WAF and Australia's Hunter

Water as a long-term training programme.

"Fiji is well positioned to meet the United Nations development goals in terms of water supply and sanitation," said Mr Ravai.

## School says "Thank you"

Dear Sir

Re: Acknowledgement

This is to acknowledge the great help rendered to the school above in the repairing and the changing of the waters piping system in the last 2 weeks of school.

Your team came in on Tuesday the 7<sup>th</sup> of April and completed their maintenance work on Friday the 17<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

Their dedication and hard work is greatly acknowledged as the students and the teachers are now drinking good clean water from the school's water storage which has not been used for 6 years now but has been repaired by the competent workers sent.

It is hoped that this acknowledgement and report will be noted and that the students, teachers and the community at large will be helped in the future when they request for it.

Thanking You,  
Yours faithfully

*S. Jitoko*  
Ilisapeci Sagale Jitoko (Mrs)  
Principal



## Consumer Council support for Liquid Trade Waste Programme (LTWP)

FOLLOWING the positive response to her presentation to the Consumer Council of Fiji, Ms Komal Devi, Acting Team Leader, Liquid Trade Waste, said that she looks forward to the Council's support and cooperation with regard to the WAF Liquid Trade Waste Programme.

Ms Devi said that the Liquid Trade Waste Programme is a mechanism designed to control the types and amount of liquid trade wastes discharged into the wastewater system. It includes standards for Liquid Trade Waste constituents in the wastewater, flow measurement, sampling and analysis, fees for discharging into the wastewater lines, pre-treatment of wastewater and penalties for non-compliance.

Ms Devi made her presentation to explain to the Council what is liquid trade

waste, the dangers it can present if discharged untreated into the wastewater system and the need for a specific programme to address these issues.

Liquid trade waste is produced by industrial and commercial operations and includes, for example, the fat and grease from restaurants, paint products, dyes from clothing manufacturing and waste petroleum products from vehicle repair garages.

When such waste is discharged into the wastewater system without any pre-treatment, it negatively impacts the wastewater infrastructure, the environment, public health and the economy.

The WAF Liquid Trade Waste Programme is currently before the Commerce Commission for endorsement of the proposed scale of fees and charges before



WAF Acting Team Leader, Ms Komal Devi making her presentation to the Consumer Council.

it is presented to Cabinet for ratification.

Ms Devi said that WAF is looking to the Consumer Council for their support in getting the Programme approved. Once this has been achieved, WAF will also seek the assistance of the Council in providing information regarding the nature of the complaints received from trade waste customers, in counseling customers and in creating awareness.

"The main problem is lack of awareness. We have explained

the problems associated with Liquid Trade Waste to more than 100 commercial customers already and have found them to be very supportive of the Programme, once they understood the damage they were causing," said Ms Devi.

"Education is very important. We also need to target High School and University students because they will be using this Programme in the next two to three years, when it becomes fully operational."

## National Water Quality Laboratory closer to ISO accreditation

THE steps necessary for the Water Authority of Fiji (WAF) National Water Quality Laboratory (NWQL) to attain ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation have been clarified, according to NWQL Project Manager, Ms Kirti Chandra.

Ms Chandra and her colleague, Q.A. Coordinator, Mr Darshana Ram, have returned from a three week training on ISO/IEC 17025 Standard -Accreditation

Criteria & Their Interpretation, conducted by the Bureau of Standards in India.

Ms Chandra said that this is the single most important standard for testing and calibration laboratories, world wide. In order to qualify for accreditation to this international standard, a laboratory must demonstrate that it is technically competent and able to produce precise and accurate

test and /or calibration data.

Accreditation, carried out by a third party, is a process that requires the demonstration of competence, with the prerequisite that the laboratory has a documented quality management system.

Ms Chandra said that the training in India (funded by the Government of India) was encouraging, as it confirmed that the NWQL "has achieved about 80% of the programme in the journey towards ISO 17025 accreditation.

"Documenting and auditing our procedures and calibrating our equipment are all necessary. Before an analysis is run, we must run a standards test first. We are assigning a key technical person to check that the correct procedures and documentation are happening."

She said that important aspects covered

during the training included basic concepts in inter-lab comparison and proficiency testing, formulation of goals, the importance of education, training and skills, policies and procedures, sources of errors in microbiological measurements, the expression of uncertainty in measurements and corrective actions and the implementation of a database system and its benefits.

Ms Chandra said that the NWQL complies with both the World Health Organisation standards and the Fiji National Water Quality Standards, which must be met before water is released into the water reticulation system.

As part of meeting the remaining 20% of the ISO 17025 standards required for accreditation, three NWQL technicians will travel to New Zealand during April for additional training in microbiology, and certification by International Accreditation New Zealand [ IANZ].



NWQL Project Manager, Ms Kirti Chandra and Q.A. Coordinator, Mr Darshana Ram, training in India.

## Short Messaging Services alerts on customers' water bills

THE introduction of a new service is allowing Water Authority of Fiji customers to receive their bills on their mobile phones, using SMS. The first of its kind in Fiji, the Get Bill SMS Service utilises technology developed by local company NewNet.

Not only do customers have immediate and on-time access to their bill, but they also receive reminders to pay and a final warning before disconnection that the bill must be paid.

The service, which is available through the Vodafone network, aims to increase customer awareness of the amount owing on their bills and, most importantly, to protect them against disconnection.

Customers can register by dialing \*703# on their mobile phones or on-line or with any WAF Customer Service Centre or WAF Payment Agent.



WAF CEO, Mr Opetai Ravai, (centre) with (left) Sanjeeva Parera, Chief Marketing Officer, Vodafone Fiji Ltd and (right) Winston Penjueli, CEO NewNet Fiji Ltd.

# Capacity building for Water Authority of Fiji Finance Department



WAF News goes global. WAF delegates distributed copies to all other international participants at the workshops in India.

THE Finance Department at Water Authority of Fiji (WAF) has received a boost in capacity building with three staff members attending training workshops in New Delhi, India.

Finance Officer, Budgeting and Reporting, Ms Neelam Kumar, attended the three-week training in English Proficiency and Business Communication that included accent neutralisation, business communication in different environments, negotiating skills, letter and

our work. I am looking forward to applying what I have learnt," said Ms Kumar.

Ms Joanna Kaloucava, WAF CAPEX Accountant and Financial Accountant, Mr Donald Kishore, attended the three-week, in-depth training on Public Financial Management, where training on the International Public Sector Accounting standards (IPSAS).

These are a set of accounting standards issued by the International Public Sector

report writing. "The section on report writing was especially useful as I am in the Budgeting Department and preparing reports is a major part of

Accounting Standards Board, (IPSASB) an independent organ of the International Federation of Accountants (IFA).

Ms Kaloucava explained that the IPSAS standards are based on Accrual Accounting system, as opposed to the Cash based system, and that "at the moment it is difficult to compare the GDP of a country with another if different standards frameworks are being used. The goal is for all countries to adopt these standards."

The aim of IPSAS is to increase transparency and accountability by improving the quality of financial reporting by public sector entities, so that Governments can make better informed resource allocation decisions and assessments.

Mr Kishore said, "A valuable part of the workshop was the opportunity to discuss and compare the advantages and

disadvantages of different forms of accounting systems used in different developing countries with particular reference to Public Expenditure Management and Public Financial Management (PFM). Sound PFM plays an essential role that facilitates the achievement of the objectives of fiscal discipline, strategic planning and improved service delivery."

Approximately 30 participants represented twenty countries at the two training workshops. All three from Fiji expressed their appreciation to the Governments of Fiji and India and to the Executive Management of WAF for this opportunity. They agreed that they have returned "inspired" by the experience and that the cultural exchange and the information sharing with the other international participants contributed to the success of the workshops.

## Latest water mapping technology on view in Las Vegas



Delegates at the Las Vegas conference view the latest technology for managing water and wastewater networks.

AMONGST the 5,000 participants at the three-day Trimble Dimension Conference, held in Las Vegas late last year, was Water Authority of Fiji (WAF) Geographic Information System Team Leader, Mr Josua Wainiqolo.

He had the opportunity to experience the latest technology available for Water Mapping and Work Management that includes a Cloud-based and GIS-centric software platform, offering standard applications that

are focused on visualising and managing water, wastewater and stormwater network maintenance and data collection activities.

The new developments are relevant to WAF as the company's GPS Base Station is a Trimble product, used on an every-day basis.

"I was so fortunate to be the first (not including Australia and New Zealand) from the Pacific to attend this Conference. It is only held every two years, so I appreciate my trip being fully funded by Trimble Dimension to attend," he said.

## Customers apply for free water



Free water for Mr Vatimi Mateiwai and family.

BY mid-April, a total of 21,637 Water Authority of Fiji (WAF) customers had applied to register for the Free Water Campaign.

Here, Mr Vatimi Mateiwai of Nayavumata Rd, Kalabu, Nasinu, and three of his grandchildren celebrate receiving verification

that they qualify as recipients of free water.

The family is just one of the 13,935 households from the Central/Eastern Northern and Western Divisions registered so far as beneficiaries of the initiative.

## Health screening for all employees

THE Water Authority of Fiji (WAF) has introduced six-monthly health screening for all staff, some of whom assembled at Manohan Building to take advantage of the service carried out by



Nurses prepare health screening for WAF employees.

nurses from the Ministry of Health.

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